

# REE Ethics Program

## Participation in Non-USDA Publications

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### References:

[REE Policy and Procedure 150.1, Dissemination of Public Information by ARS](#)

[REE P&P 152.1, Procedures for Publishing Manuscripts and Abstracts with Non-USDA Publishers \(Outside Publishing\)](#)

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Ethics Advisors often receive questions from ARS scientists about editing or writing book chapters. Most often, the scientist wishes to do this as part of his or her official duties. Following are requirements for you to consider should you wish to participate in preparing non-USDA publications on official time.

1. The Area Director must approve an ARS employee's use of official time to edit or write official materials for textbooks, monographs, manuals, or other non-USDA publications. Approval is based on the following:

- Publication is within the scope of his or her official duties.
- Employee's advance request to the Area Director for permission to undertake the work on official Government time.
- Project would help discharge the information obligation of ARS.
- No compensation from sources outside ARS will be accepted for project. Please note: Government employees may NOT request that royalties be given to a specific nonprofit organization. Employees MAY ONLY request that royalties be donated to a nonprofit organization of the publisher's choice.

2. The material must be cleared by:

- Area Director for technical accuracy.
- If the material interprets the policies of the USDA, deals with sensitive issues or programs, or needs to be cleared by other departments or agencies, it shall be submitted to the Information Staff. In turn, the Information Staff will evaluate and, if necessary, forward to Office of Communications for final clearance.

### 3. COPYRIGHT

- Under the copyright law, Government works CANNOT be copyrighted. In responding to a request to sign a transfer of copyright, employee must return the form UNSIGNED with a cover letter that contains the following statement:

“The article cited was prepared by a USDA employee as part of his or her official duties and cannot legally be copyrighted. The fact that the private publication in which the article appears is itself copyrighted does not affect the material of the Government, which can be reproduced by the public at will.”

For further information, please contact Sandy Miller Hays (Phone: 301-504-1636;  
E-mail: [sandy.millerhays@ars.usda.gov](mailto:sandy.millerhays@ars.usda.gov)) or contact the Ethics Advisor servicing your  
Agency/area/location: <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/ethics/agency.htm>